GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4120
ANSWERED ON:17.12.2014
TRAWLER IN SRILANKAN CUSTODY
Hari Shri G.

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian fishermen have been using the method of bottom trawling for more than four decades and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Sri Lanka has opposed this method of Indian fishermen and if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether as a retaliatory move, Sri Lanka has made it clear that it will not free the trawlers of Indian fishermen in its custody and if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to sort out the said issue with Sri Lanka?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD)]

(a) & (b) Government of Sri Lanka has informed the Government that Indian fishermen engage in bottom trawling in the terri- torial waters of Sri Lanka. Under the relevant laws and regu- lations, there is a complete ban on bottom trawling in Sri Lanka.

(c) & (d) As on 12 December 2014, there are 87 Indian fishing vessels under the custody of Sri Lanka.

Government attaches the highest importance to the safety, security and welfare of Indian fishermen and, in this regard, has consistently taken up the issue of release of Indian fishermen and boats with the Government of Sri Lanka. Government is also steadfastly working, in close cooperation with the relevant stakeholders, in finding a long term solution to this issue.